

NSW GREENS

Government fails to legislate to protect National Parks from amateur hunters

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The O'Farrell Government has today failed to deliver on its promise to properly protect National Parks from unsupervised amateur hunting and has signalled it will continue to promote hunting with scarce tax dollars.

The Game and Feral Animal Control Amendment Bill 2013 was introduced to parliament today and provides for the abolition of the Game Council as well as creating a new hunter-dominated board to advise government.

Greens MP and Firearms Spokesperson David Shoebridge said:

"The Premier promised that under his new scheme the protections for the public would be the strongest in the country, but this bill fails to deliver that.

"With this Bill there is no requirement that amateur hunters on any public land be professionally supervised.

"The newly created advisory board risks repeating the past failures of the Game Council by being dominated by hunters and excluding animal welfare and firearms safety experts.

"The bill continues a legislative scheme that promotes hunting of deer and native water birds, all it has done is put the Department of Primary Industries in charge rather than the Game Council.

"While the abolition of the failed Game Council is a real positive, it should not just be replaced with a government department that is given the same pro-hunter agenda.

"This legislation retains the concept of 'game animals' and the ongoing promotion of amateur hunting, despite the fact that this unnecessarily diverts attention from professional and effective methods of feral animal control.

"The community in NSW has made it known that it opposes unsupervised amateur hunting in our State Forests and National Parks but it seems the Government has still not gotten the memo.

"The abolition of the Game Council remains a positive step by this government, and an achievement that the community should be proud of. Now is the time to build on that achievement not back away from it," Mr Shoebridge said.

Media contact: 9230 3030

David Shoebridge

Greens MP in the NSW Legislative Council
P: (02) 9230 3030 T: @ShoebridgeMLC